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PRESS RELEASE

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LACDMH PARTNERS WITH UNIVISION FOR LIVE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS PHONE BANK

Six Southern California counties will simultaneously view and call into the network event.

Los Angeles, CA – The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) is partnering with Univision to host a phone bank on **Thursday, May 29th from 5:30PM-11:30PM** on **Channel 34** in Los Angeles. This event will help create awareness and discussion of mental health issues affecting the Spanish-speaking communities. The telethon will be simultaneously viewed live in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura and Kern counties. LACDMH staff will be interviewed live during the six hour event and nearly 40 Spanish-speaking volunteers will participate in answering calls and giving mental health referrals, including the ACCESS line (1-800-854-7771).

"Few things are more confusing and frightening to a family or an individual as the emergence of mental health symptoms. Sometimes this confusion leads to the tragic mistake of self-medication with alcohol and drugs. But knowledge is power: Univision is stepping forward to bring the knowledge that we should not fear mental illness because it can be treated," said LACDMH Director Marvin Southard, D.S.W.

Since January 2014, LACDMH and Univision's Senior Mental Health Reporter, Julio Cesar Ortiz, M.F.T., have worked together on a bi-weekly segment for its nightly news show, entitled "Una Mente, Una Vida," a discussion of mental health issues and decreasing the stigma associated with the diagnosis of mental illness. Julio Cesar Ortiz, M.F.T., and the LACDMH Public Information Office (PIO) collaborated on the project, committing to several months of featured stories. Univision reaches over 1.2 million viewers during the 11PM news broadcast and over 2 million during the 6PM broadcast. To watch the most recent segments of "Una Mente, Una Vida," click here: <http://t.co/wYs8HtsWbi>.

(More)

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health is the largest county-operated mental health department in the United States, directly operating 75 program sites and more than 100 co-located sites. Each year, it contracts with approximately 1,000 agencies and individual practitioners to provide a spectrum of mental health services to more than 250,000 residents of all ages. The Department's mission -- enriching lives through partnership to strengthen our community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency -- is accomplished by working with stakeholders and community partners to provide clinically competent, culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate mental health services to clients in the least restrictive manner possible.

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